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writings. The bibliography will be found especially rich in regard to the labor problem and the question of poor relief, but so far as we have been able to discover, no important topic is omitted, and under each heading a sufficient number of references is given to tax the resources of even the best equipped library. German literature is, of course, more completely reviewed than English, French or Italian, but in the treatment of such a peculiarly English topic as the Irish question the references are so full and complete that it is doubtful if an English bibliography could have done better. Detailed criticism of such a monumental compilation must be left to time and the co-operative work of students of all lands. For the present we can only express our gratitude for this latest product of German thoroughness and industry.

REVIEWS.

Heures de Travail et Salaires. Étude sur l'amélioration directe de la condition des Ouvriers industriels. By MAURICE ANSIAUX. Pp. 299. Paris: Felix Alcan. Bruxelles: Larcier, 1896.

In his treatment of the labor problem M. Ansiaux is an optimistic conservative. He believes strongly in the necessity and the possibility of improvement in the conditions of the laboring classes, but rejects as impracticable the remedies and reforms proposed by extremists of all classes. His book does not add much, if anything, to our knowledge of the conditions of labor in different parts of the world. Its purpose is rather to analyze well-known conditions and the remedies proposed for their improvement, and to show what is and what is not practicable and along what lines and how, better conditions may be attained.

M. Ansiaux finds the chief causes of the labor problem in the following facts: (1) A permanent wage-earning class which owes its existence to the concentration of industry, occasioned by the widespread use of machinery; (2) Competition on an international scale which has made a progressive cheapening of the cost of production a condition of business success; (3) An over-development of the instrumentalities of production, caused by the concentration of wealth, and leading to the problem of the unemployed. Under these new conditions progress for the laboring class can only be attained through the improvement of the conditions of the wage-earner as such. He cannot as a rule hope to better himself by rising to the rank of master or entrepreneur. A wage-earner he must remain, and, as such, through a progressive shortening of the working day and a progressive rise in wages, he must keep pace with the onward movement of civilization.

The question is, how can the length of the working day be shortened and at the same time the income of the average laboring man increased? The plans and propositions of the socialists are considered first by the author, and are found to be impracticable. He has little difficulty in proving much of their reasoning fallacious and many of their schemes utopian. In the opinion of M. Ansiaux no plan for the improvement of the conditions of the laboring man can offer any hope of success which involves an increase of the cost of production. Unless a shorter working day and higher wages carry with them, as an effect, a corresponding increase in the efficiency of labor, they cannot, he claims, be permanent or beneficial to the laboring class in the long run. Accordingly he investigates in chapters xv. and xviii. the relation between the length of the working day, the height of wages, and the efficiency of the laborer. His conclusion is that, wherever the length of the working day is excessive, its shortening will be accompanied by an increase in efficiency. The same may be said of a rise of wages from a point that is inhumanely low. The point, however, at which the shortening of the working day and the increase of wages cease to increase efficiency is different in different industries and varies with different classes of laborers. It follows that the limits within which it is possible to decree a general rise of wages or a general shortening of hours in all industries are very narrow, but it does not follow that great changes along these lines may not be practicable in particular industries. Indeed, M. Ansiaux shows that, through modifications of the methods of remuneration, calculated to establish the closest possible connection between the amount of pay received by a particular workman and the quantity and quality of his work, and through improvements in the organization of labor and in the instrumentalities of production, continuous, and, in many cases, great changes in hours and wages may be made possible.

The last four chapters of the book treat of the possibility and the methods of educating employers and employes to a recognition of their mutual interests, rights and obligations, of the functions of trade unions and strikes, of the duty of the state, and of the utility of conciliation and arbitration in the attainment of shorter hours and higher wages. In the discussion of these difficult subjects M. Ansiaux exhibits good judgment, unusual freedom from prejudice, excellent powers of analysis, and a praiseworthy desire to be of real service to both employers and employes.

All things considered the book is an excellent illustration of the application of the scientific habit of mind and of the scientific spirit to the solution of a difficult social question.

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